(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action plan of the Centre to help the State to develop their maritime sector to make the ports in Orissa to handle a good amount of cargo?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI TR. BAALU): (a) to (c) There is one Major Port in the State of Orissa namely Paradip Port which is under control of the Central Government. Under the National Maritime Development Programme (NMDP), a total of 28 projects involving an investment of Rs. 2403 crores have been identified to be taken up for implementation by the Paradip Port Trust over the period upto 2011-12. Non-major ports are under the overall jurisdiction of the respective State Governments. It has been reported by the Government of Orissa that draft Orissa Maritime Board Bill is under preparation.

Completion of NH-43 in KBK region

499. MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the status of completion of NH-43 stretch of road passing through the KBK region in Orissa;

(b) whether this stretch is in a precarious condition in that it is full of pot-holes and breaches caused by rains and the stretch has become accident prone; and

(c) if so, the action plan of the Centre to expedite completion of the above stretch of the road?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA): (a) The length of NH-43 in Orissa, entirely falling in KBK region is 156.542 km. This comprises 104.655 km. of two lane width, 19 km. of intermediate lane width and remaining 32.887 km. of single lane width. The widening works to double lane width are at different stages of implementation in a length of 21.287 km.

(b) There were no breaches during the current year rains and the potholes occurred have been rectified. The road is in traffic worthy condition.

(c) The development & maintenance of National Highways is a continuous process. Based on inter-se-priority and availability of funds, the improvement works will be taken up in phases through Annual Plans.

Safety from Tsunami due to Ramsetu

† 500. SHRI SHREEGOPAL VYAS:
SHRI BALAVANT *ALIAS* BAL APTE:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the coasts of Tamil Nadu remained safe from Tsunami waves due to Ramsetu;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) whether CDs related to the said subject have been distributed in Tamil Nadu in large numbers;

(c) whether the said fact was taken in consideration while taking decision regarding implementation of Sethusamudram project; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI TR. BAALU): (a) and (b) Simulation studies of the Tsunami of 2004 have been conducted by the Ministry of Earth Sciences. That Ministry has expressed the opinion that Adam's Bridge has no bearing on the safety of the coast from a Tsunami because of the fact that the southern coast of Tamil Nadu falls under the shadow region of Sri Lanka. No instance of distribution of CDs on the studies amongst the public has come to notice.

(c) and (d) Decision on implementation of the Sethusamudram Ship Channel Project was taken by the Government after taking into consideration all relevant factors.

Proposals for expressways and highways in Punjab

501. SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL: Will the Minister of SHIPPING ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that several proposals for expressways and highways in the State of Punjab are pending with Government for clearance;

(b) if so, the details of such proposals pending with Government; and

(c) the details of Government plans to improve the condition of roads in various parts of Punjab during the next two years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) This Ministry is responsible for development and maintenance of National Highways in the country. Ministry plans to improve the condition of roads under National Highways Development Project (NHDP) and National Highways (Original) works. Four laning of about 234 km. National Highways at a cost of Rs. 1564 crore (Approximate) is taken up under NHDP Phase II and III. Detailed Project Reports for 4 laning of about 212 km. National Highways are under preparation under NHDP Phase III. The works of about 14 km. four laning, 16 km. widening to two lane, 81 km. strengthening, 16 km. improvement of riding quality, 130 km. paved shoulders, construction of three bridges, road safety and other miscellaneous works to the tune of Rs. 200 crore have been included under National Highways (Original works) in the Annual Plan 2007-08. The Annual Plan 2008-09 is yet to be finalised.

Widening of NH-24

502. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of SHIPPING ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to widen National Highway-24 in view of increasing traffic;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. National Highway No. 24